Questions and Answers for Solicitation NNG14476256R

1. The schedule suggests a 30-day response time. Is this accurate?

   The response time will be 45 days.

2. Will the attendance list be published?

   The attendance list for the pre-solicitation conference was posted to FedBizOps on June 10, 2014.

3. Can you speak to conferences from an operational standpoint?

   Some conferences that the EED contractor regularly attends are:

   Earth Science Information Partners (ESIP) Federation
   American Geophysical Union (AGU)
   Earth Science Data Systems Working Group (ESDSWG)

4. Do you require EVM Reporting on all tasks or just major tasks? If just major tasks, what is the threshold to determine if EVM reporting is excused?

   EVM is required on task order modifications or upgrades over $20M, but the government reserves the right to require EVM to be used on lower dollar value task orders and will make the determination on a task by task basis. The Contractor must be able to provide EVM.

5. Do you currently use TOMS (Task Order Management System) for your task order management or have another Task Order Management System that is used for EED? Is there flexibility to use a contractor developed system?

   The EED contract does not use the Task Order Management System (TOMS) for task order management. We are open to ideas for accommodating a task-order management system, but it must add value, and not be a burden to government staff or contractors.

6. Will there be a formal sign off at transition?

   The Government will expect a capability demonstration test to be run to prove that the contractor is up to performing all sustaining activities.

7. Is trouble ticketing part of this contract?

Trouble ticketing is a part of this contract.

8. After contract award, is it the Government's intention to provide recommendations to the prime contractor regarding suggested subcontractors that could support the EED-2 effort?

The Government will not provide recommendations to the prime contractor regarding suggested subcontractors. The subcontractors chosen by the prime are at their discretion.

9. The peak number on the LPDAAC looks low. Is that a mistake?

The peaks are determined from the EMS metrics and they are accurate. The values for the requirement were skewed for LPDAAC because the table was extracted from a potential baseline that included large products that are not part of the requirement as of yet. We will provide an updated chart.

10. Will there be a plug number for travel?

A plug number for travel will be provided with the final RFP

11. Will there be tours of the Raytheon facility?

Tours of the Raytheon Facility were held on June 16, 2014, June 17, 2014 and June 23, 2014.

12. What is the composition of the SEB?

The Composition of the SEB will be posted with the Final RFP. Please note that there is a black out period in which contractors should not have any contact with Board Members after the Final RFP is released.

13. Can you provide the numbers of licenses that EED has for all licensed products?

A list of licenses will be published in the EED-2 Technical Reference Library.

14. What is the most antiquated part of the system?

The custom code for SDPS is the oldest element in the system. All of our COTS hardware components are on a regular refresh cycle. SDPS is maintained to keep pace with the technology changes of its interfaces.

15. Have you been affected by the IBM server issues?

The EED contract is not affected by the IBM server issues.

16. Is being offsite a good thing for 2 hour response time?

    The awardee will need to meet the requirement to be able to attend a meeting (management level) within a 2 hour response time.

17. What is the biggest risk in transition?

    Staff recapture could be a big issue as the time for training new staff on all components of the system may take some time.

18. Can you explain the service desks? How do you get urgent service if a DAAC fails?

    For SDPS, the problem management procedure is described in Section 8 of the Release 8.2 Mission Operations Procedures for the EED Contract. This document will be posted to the EED RFP Technical Library but is available publically at: http://edhs1.gsfc.nasa.gov/waisdata/eed/pdf/611eed001_Rev02_1.pdf.

19. Would you consider using a different model for technical refresh?

    Any future approach decisions will be made based on benefit and the cost versus risk.

20. Can the Development and Test Facility be located near staff or can it be elsewhere?

    ESDIS does not have a requirement for the Development and Test Facility to be local.

21. What is the rationale for RTO2?

    RTO 2 does not describe an upcoming mission. It describes 2 hypothetical instruments that are picked based on data that typically goes to the DAACs covered under EED-2.

22. Will the contractor be responsible for shipping data in-country?

    The ECS System does not have a requirement to ship data on physical media. However, the EED-2 contractor will take all responsibility for shipping property to/from sites.

23. Who is administering the technical library?

    Government personnel are responsible for updating the website and approving user registrations, and Adnet Systems, Inc. is responsible for system administration of the Wiki and server on which it resides.

24. Will system maturity drive what you do in the future?

    The system is very mature and stable. Newer things like User Registration and ECHO are very reliable.

25. Are RTOs awardable Task Orders?

RTO1 and RTO3 are awardable Task Orders.

26. Will the final RFP identify Key Positions or will you ask the contractor to identify the key positions?

The contractor will identify the Key Personnel.

27. Is all the equipment at Riverdale GFE, including desktop equipment?

All the equipment that will transfer to the EED-2 contractor that is currently in the EDF, PVC, VATC, i.e., the Riverdale development/test facility, is considered GFE.

28. Is storage LAN-based and/or SAN-based? How is it handled?

Right now it's evolved into large-scale RAID systems. Our requirements for storage are all based on work performed under the contract and we work with the contractor to determine the best solutions.

29. How do you expand your customer base? Are you interested in developing more commercial partners?

We are always interested in new customers. For example, we set up a new system, LANCE, to support applications users, which are often commercial partners. We believe that there are many additional areas for customer growth for NASA research data found in the EOSDIS.

30. Will there be more on the tech refresh schedule?

The property list will be updated to include the purchase dates and, where known, end-of-service life date.

31. Are you happy with the current release cycle?

For SDPS, the release cycle is determined by the DAACs' preference to keep major releases to be annual because they expend resources to transition each release. They do take smaller changes, patches and test executables, when they need them.

32. Are you concerned about having development efforts not concluded sufficiently prior to end-of-contract which could lead to major issues in the transition phase?

We are requiring deliverables to be done by contract end.

33. Currently what percentage of contractor staff at the Raytheon facility has GSFC PIV cards?

Currently 90 percent of the contractor staff at the Raytheon facility has GSFC PIV cards.

34. Scientist and academia have been traditional users of earth science data, with the data becoming more available can you tell us who you see as new (additional) data users?

There are many avenues that allow users access to NASA Earth Science data products. We see a growth in all areas and expect that there are many people who will become new users of NASA Earth Science data.

35. Do you see the data collections increasing due to non-traditional data sources (Google, CubeSats, UAVs, etc) being ingested and products developed or enhanced in pursuit of "value added" products and services and providing them via NASA systems, versus providing the data and letting others develop the value added products or services?

DAACs are the traditional front-end to new users including those that seek to provide value added products on a commercial basis. Every year we see these types of additional users and expect that trend to continue. Making data more useable is always encouraged.

36. Understanding that ESDIS is looking to continually promote its data collections, as an example the Amazon Web Service Cloud, have you looked at Integrated Rule-Oriented Data System (IRODS) as a means to bring in more disparate data sources?

We're always looking at ways to expand the use of our data. The data that we support is directed by requirements from NASA HQ. We don't solicit new products for our data centers. Products do have to have a science basis.

37. With regard to DAACs Wednesday Preventive Maintenance downtime, have the DAACs undergone any virtualization or clustering technology refreshes that may help to move away from downtime period?

Anything that's' more robust is welcome within an acceptable risk/cost perspective.

38. A strategy to provide savings while increasing the skill-set pool and providing longer services hours would be to use companies outside the DC area and also using telecommuting – areas such as testing and software engineering seem logical candidates. Would you be supportive of approaches leveraging telecommuting and are there specific functions that you feel do not lend themselves to such an approach?

There is no objection to telecommuting.

39. Can testers be outside the area?

There's still a 2 hour response time for meetings, but staff could be located outside our local area.

40. Is equipment sent to telecommuters?

We must meet all NASA security requirements in supporting telecommuting.

41. How do you determine what goes in to software releases and what are the intervals for releases?

For SDPS, the release cycle is determined by the DAACs' preference to keep major releases to be annual because they expend resources to transition each release. They do take smaller changes, patches and test executables, when they need them. For Coherent Web, URS, ECHO, there are weekly prioritization meetings that feed into sprint planning. Sprint planning examines higher level ESDIS goals, weighs against outstanding Nonconformance Reports, and available labor pool to determine what can be accommodated in the sprints.

42. Will the Data Item Descriptions (DIDs) referenced be placed out on the Digital Library?

The DIDs will be included in the EED-2 Technical Reference Library.

43. Does each Configuration Management system group have representatives from the DAAC?

Yes, the groups are flexible.

44. We understand the User Registration system is being implemented with a phased implementation approach, how far into the schedule is the implementation and have you encountered any major issues?

URS is expected to be an ongoing effort supporting integration at the DAACs until mid-July 2015.

45. Will URS Continue?

URS will continue.

46. This is a CPAF IDIQ, is there base fee?

This is a Cost Plus Award Fee, Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract but there is no base fee.

47. Can you characterize the Task Orders? How many, complexity, etc?

All Task Orders under the current contract are posted in the EED Procurement Library. Although EED-2 is an IDIQ contract the scope of the tasks must be in support of EOSDIS.

48. Do you see task orders on-going during the transition?

    We're trying to plan the work to end at the end of the calendar year, but that can't always be controlled.

49. On RTOs we can improve the answers if we know the deliverables we're responsible for.

    For RTO1 we will provide an approximation for how many defects, on average, are to be dispositioned per month for each of the components.

50. Is there a technical spike that's coming?

    We do surgical replacements such as ECHO. Changes are driven by Headquarters and the science community. We have generally refreshed all hardware as it reaches end-of-service life and we keep up to date with COTS software products given that it does not impact our development efforts.

51. Is open source the preference versus COTS?

    Yes. The fact that a product is open source is one factor in evaluating whether it will be used in our system.

52. Can we schedule meetings with Government procurement and technical folks?

    Offerors are able to schedule meetings until the Final RFP is released.

53. Can we submit questions after blackout?

    Please submit all of your questions and comments now. If, after RFP release, there's some issue that will require an amendment, please let us know. The Contracting Officer and/or Contract Specialist can be contacted after the blackout period.

54. Regarding system evolution, do you see major architecture changes or small stuff?

    There are no major architecture changes. We would like to take advantage of new technology and don't expect to start from scratch as the system has evolved.

55. Is the list of equipment in the DRFP all of it?

    Anything the incumbent has outside of GFE is for their own purposes.

56. How do you get equipment?

The contractor is responsible for obtaining the equipment for the government.

57. Is there a technical library?

    There is the EED-2 Technical Reference Library and the EED-2 Procurement Library. The location can be found in the Draft RFP and FedBizOps.

58. Do you know of new spacecraft to be added?

    We know there will be. NASA.gov lists new missions. RTO1 is sustaining engineering that supports existing missions. RTO2 is for supporting 2 hypothetical instruments on a future mission.

59. Any information on the number of people needed?

    The number of people needed to perform the effort will differ depending upon the approach proposed.

60. Is there any way to tell what the work will be?

    The Offeror can check the CCRs which show past work flow. For SDPS release 8.1 (the previous) and 8.2 (the current SDPS release) we've posted 'SDPS Release 8.1 Tracking' and 'SDPS Release 8.2 Tracking' which shows history of patches, Test Executables, and the original release. The CCRs noted in these charts are contained in the CCRs by year pages and are Tar'd. Activity associated with COTS S/W is shown in the SDPS COTS Software Tracking page. A history of COTS software CCRs are shown. The CCR numbers are listed and the PSR documents (914-TDA-xxx) are available via the 'Technical Documentation – 914-TDA-xxx – Release Notes' page.

61. Any high performance computing requirements in the future?

    There are no high performance computing requirements. Most processing is done at SIPS & outside our scope.

62. Are there users you would like to get to?

    Our user base is growing exponentially with distribution. Our user base is mostly science researchers, but recently we're seeing more general public usage, media, etc.

63. Does RTO1 include DAAC operations?

    RTO1 does not require labor for DAAC operations support. That work is within the scope of the contract, however.

64. What are some of the challenges facing the EOSDIS System Architecture from a Future Mission Support perspective? Will EED2 Contractor be required to make significant changes to the architecture?

There has been significant evolution since 2005. In the recent past, evolution has been more esurgical to accomplish specific technical goals or cost-savings.. New missions such as ICESat 2 will require changes.

65. When you add missions is it modular?

We have to make sure the system can handle it then we work it through the system.

66. Is most of the contract run from GSFC or remote locations?

Riverdale is the hub. The DAACs are separate contracts and Raytheon has representatives at each DAAC & provides a detailed description of how the system works & who does what.

67. Per 7150.2A what class of software components is sustained in this contract?

It's class D. SDPS and ECHO, being developed prior to Sept 27, 2004, are not subject to 7150.2A.

68. According to RFP Section H, will the EED 2 procurement be subject to any price adjustment for SDBs per FAR Subpart 19.11

In accordance with NASA Procurement Information Circular 09-03, NASA has suspended the use of FAR 19.11 regarding price evaluation adjustments for Small Disadvantaged Business Concerns.

69. RFP Section K – will the "Responsibility Matters" per FAR 9.104 be considered and/or evaluated before/for an award or at contract start after completion of the transition period?

This is determined prior to award. FAR 9.103(b) states "No purchase or award shall be made unless the contracting officer makes an affirmative determination of responsibility."

70. RFP Section M – RTOs Evaluation – Currently, what tools (by name and vendor), COTS or custom made, will be provided by the government for use on the EE Project for:

-Requirements Management and verification
-System design, development and testing
-System development lifecycle management

-Software design, development, integration and testing
-Software quality assurance
-System simulations, performance evaluation and metrics collection
-Risk Management
-Earned Value Management/Measurement (EVM)
-Documentation and Collaboration
-Task Order Management
-Configuration Management (CM)

There's a technical documents section on the website, including a COTS list. All equipment purchased by the contractor will be transferred to the government and then to the EED 2 contractor.

71. SOW WBS 2, Transition of Engineering Responsibilities – Considering that a new contractor may incur significantly more cost than proposed by the current incumbent for the transition of the EED hardware and software to its new facilities, what factors will influence the government's decision to select a new EED 2 contractor and pay higher transition costs, even if all other costs are about even among all offerors?

The Government will evaluate the process of transition, not the cost. The cost of the transition will not be part of the cost evaluation.

72. SOW WBS 8, Studies and Prototyping, what modeling and simulation tools are currently being used in the EED environment to support the studies and prototyping efforts? Will these tools be provided by the government to support this effort?

Yes. The Government uses different tools depending on the study. The deliverables are the technical papers, not the tools.

73. The RFP and SOW both reference the need for 2 hour response for meetings and implying that contractor facilities be in a location in close proximity to GSFC. Does the Government require that all contractor personnel supporting EED-2 be located in that contractor location or can multiple locations be utilized for support?

There is no requirement for all contractor personnel to be in one location.

74. Will the Government identify in the final RFP the existing virtualized GFE systems and the degree of virtualization?

The Government has a summary of hosts and virtual hosts posted on the RFP technical site. That list that will be updated and reposted, however, with the agile software development lifecycle used on URS, Coherent Web, and ECHO the number of virtual

hosts can change much more frequently than the configuration of the SDPS. Coherent Web and ECHO have seen much more frequency of VM environments stood up/taken down than URS and SDPS

75. SOW: "The contractor's overall goal shall be to continuously improve the reliability, availability, functionality, operability, and performance *of hardware and software systems within the EOSDIS* while reducing operational and maintenance costs." Does the Government require that EED2 hardware and software be Government owned/licensed GFE? Are bidders able to provide non-Government owned hardware/software approaches to reduce operational and maintenance costs for example using "as a Service" approaches?

The Government would evaluate any proposed approaches in our effort to determine best-value to the government.

76. What are your most important initiatives in the near future?

Operations are important as well as strategic planning, evolving earth data portal, consolidated metadata repository, new missions (SMAP) also ESA Centennial; more user registrations and we anticipate JPSS and JPSS-2.

77. Do you anticipate convergence between ECS and ANGe (Archive Next Generation)?

There's concern at Langley regarding the high level of staffing but no near term expectation for convergence.

78. What improvements would you like to achieve to your current systems and infrastructure?

Our current systems do ingest, archive and distribution very well. There is always room for improvements. We see that improvements will be driven by standardization and better metadata. We haven't pursued cloud computing but not averse to similar options if they're safe and secure as are our current systems.

79. Are savings to DAACs of interest?

Savings of operations activities at the DAACs, which could then convert over to cost savings for ESDIS or repurposing labor-hours available to more valuable efforts, are always a part of our analysis of new proposals.

80. With respect to the transition time, is there any significant evolutionary software coming?

We are installing new backup equipment which replicates the DAACs. A baseline published with the RFP will have property lists update that includes purchase date and

end-of-service-life date where known. This would not be considered evolutionary software, but it does represent a change to the system baseline.